The Classical Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/CAR>

Additional services for *The Classical Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)

A New Theory of Word-Forms *Die Entstehung der Dehnstufe*. Steeitbebg Von Wilhelm. Strassburg: Trübner. 1895.

P. Giles

The Classical Review / Volume 9 / Issue 02 / March 1895, pp 115 - 117
DOI: 10.1017/S0009840X00201376, Published online: 27 October 2009

Link to this article: http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0009840X00201376

How to cite this article:

P. Giles (1895). The Classical Review, 9, pp 115-117 doi:10.1017/S0009840X00201376

Request Permissions : [Click here](#)

A NEW THEORY OF WORD-FORMS.

Die Entstehung der Dehnstufe. Von WILHELM STREITBERG, Strassburg: Trübner. 1895.

IN the armoury of philologists for the last twenty years accent has been the most important weapon. A theory of accent produced Brugmann's doctrine of sonant nasals and liquids, another theory of accent produced Fick's explanation of the interchange of *e* and *o* vowels in the same root. The new theory with which this paper deals is also founded upon accent, although it rises in the end to a suggestion that the physical theory of the Conservation of Energy extends to language. The theory deals with processes which took place in the original Indo-germanic language, but which have parallels in its modern descendants. Moreover it deals with words in their finished and complete form. As the author says with justice, the theory is not exposed to the objections which attach to all schemes of root-expansion and the like—theories which he obviously regards, as do others, with considerable suspicion.

Ever since modern theories of sound-change began, the question has repeatedly been raised: Why, for example in Greek, should we have such forms as *πατήρ* with a long vowel while all other cases from the same stem *πατέρα*, *πατράσι*, *πατρός* have either a short stem-vowel or no vowel at all? Why in Latin *pēs* but *pēdem*, *pēdis*? Again, why *Ζεύς* with an acute accent, *vaūs* with a circumflex? To all of these questions various answers have been given at different times. But like the priest of Nemi each answer obtained sway by the slaughter of its predecessor and held its power only till a better came. And change followed change with wonderful rapidity. The present theory, if not armed against all conclusions, seems at least less easy of overthrow than its predecessors.

The theory which Professor Streitberg sets forth in this treatise—a reprint from vol. iii. of the *Indogermanische Forschungen*—is not in all respects new. Several scholars, Johansson, Bechtel, Michels, have contributed among them great part of the materials. All that Professor Streitberg modestly claims to have done is to co-ordinate the results of the scholars mentioned, and to have corrected them where correction was necessary. In fact, out of scattered hints unsupported or but scantily supported on the part of

their authors by evidence, he has built up the structure of a complete theory. Curiously enough he seems not to know of a scholar who had promulgated an attempted scheme earlier than any of the three scholars to whom he refers. In the introduction to *Den graeske Nominal-flexion* published by Dr. Torp at Christiania in 1890 a cruder and less complete scheme than Dr. Streitberg's is to be found. Whether, however, it is Dr. Torp's own, or borrowed, there is, if I mistake not, nothing in the little book to show.

The question to be answered is: What are the causes why original short vowels should be found lengthened in certain definite groups of instances? Dr. Streitberg's reply is: 'If a mora has been lost in a word, an accented short syllable immediately preceding the lost mora is lengthened, while a long syllable immediately preceding, if it has the acute accent, changes it to the circumflex.'

The loss of a mora may take place in one or other of three ways: (1) a whole syllable may be lost, (2) a long syllable succeeding the accented syllable may be shortened, (3) a long diphthong like *āu*, *ōu*, *ān*, *ōn* (for *u* and *n* discharge in such combinations precisely similar functions) may lose its second component. Dr. Streitberg brings analogies from many modern languages to show that a similar rule prevails there also. An illustration from English, which he does not mention, will elucidate the rule as well as another. If the rule propounded above were to hold true in modern English, a disyllable like *cannot* (pronounced *cānot*) should be represented when reduced to a monosyllable by a syllable containing a long vowel *cānt*, the two morae represented by the two short vowels being now represented by one long vowel (=two morae). This is really what happens, for the result of repeated experiment is to show that *can't* takes precisely the same time to pronounce in ordinary conversation as *cannot*.

The so-called monosyllabic root-words are therefore a development out of disyllabic words; the Doric *πός* (the vocalism of the Attic *ποός* is still unexplained), the Latin *pēs* represent therefore a more original **pōdos* or **pēdos*. The Latin *vōx* must be carried back to a form **uōgos* parallel to the Homeric accusative (*φ*) *όπα*, parallel also to the neuter word *ῥέπος*. Disyllabic and

monosyllabic forms from the same root often stand side by side, naturally often with a difference of meaning: *φόρος*, *φώρα*; *κλοπός*, *κλώψ*. The Greek *δῶ* in *χαλκοβατὲς δῶ* and the like represents an older **dōm* parallel to *δόμος* and Lat. *domus*. It is impossible here to go into further detail on such stems. A word, however, on two of special interest: *Zeús*, Sanskrit *dyāus*; *βοῦς*, Skt. *gāus*. These stems are distinguished, according to Streitberg, from those which have an original long vowel by this point, amongst others, that in the latter class the long vowel is carried throughout the paradigm; *νάες*, *νήες* but *βόες*, Lat. *nāvēs* but *bōvēs*. The original forms, therefore, corresponding to *Zeús* and *βοῦς* were **díēmos* and **gōmos*, from which came according to this law **díēus*, **gōus*; the original form for *ναῦς* was **nāmos*. We now see that the substantive *γλαυῖξ* may owe its circumflex by the side of its adjective *γλαυκός* to the loss of a mora in an original form **gláukos*. The diphthong with acute accent represents two morae, the diphthong with the circumflex three.

Another interesting series are the root-stems in composition. Streitberg shows that root-stems are commoner in composition than as separate words and that an *-o*-stem as a separate word often has a root-stem parallel to it in compounds; cp. *ζυγόν* with *νεόζυξ*, Lat. *semi-fer* with *ferus*. Where the accent passes forward to the first element, there a so-called root-stem has arisen in the second element by the loss of final *-os*, and root-words like *πρύξ* arise by resolution of compounds into their component parts, the separate word being properly of the type **πρύχος*. The numerous Sanskrit root-stems in composition followed by *-t* (*gō-jē-t* 'cattle-winning,' *dharma-dhē-t* 'law-observing' &c.) are successfully explained by Streitberg as reduced forms of *-to*-stems, stems which were not originally and never are exclusively passive.

It is now clear how the question as to the origin of *πατήρ* can be answered. It represents an earlier **patēros*. The suffixes *-μήν* (*ποιμήν*), *-μών* (*ἡγεμών*), *-ής* (*εὐγενής*), *-ως* (*ἡώς*) stand side by side with suffixes having a short stem vowel followed by *-o*, as in the participial *-μενος* &c. The *-s*-stems had no doubt at one time more parallels with a vowel suffix than Streitberg allows. The Homeric *γενεή* must represent **γενεοή* by the side of *γένος*. These stems with a vowel suffix must surely have existed to a large extent in early Latin; otherwise it is hard to see why from consonant stems we should have verbs of the type *gener-ā-re*,

moder-ā-re &c. With regard to forms of the type of *ιππεύς* also it is difficult to feel that Streitberg has reached a satisfactory conclusion. He would make them arise by contamination between the type represented by the Zend *bāzāuš* (= original *-bho-*) and the type represented by the Sanskrit *aravayús*. But if **díēmos* becomes *Zeús* why may not **ekmémos* become *ιππεύς*?

Professor Streitberg follows his theory through the other cases—locative, vocative, accusative—with great success. The short form of the suffix in the vocative arises by its throwing forward the accent: *πατήρ* but *πάτερ*. But whether this change of accent position is due to enclisis of the vocative in principal sentences, as Streitberg following Hirt is inclined to believe, is another story. One most ingenious point is made in the treatment of the accusative. The question is raised: why *βῶν*=Skt. *gām*, *Ζῆν*=Skt. *dyān* with circumflex? The answer is: From an original **gōm*, *díēom* would come **gōum*, **dízum* as monosyllables; the mora represented by *-u-* is lost, and according to the second part of the rule the circumflex appears instead of the acute accent. On the other hand there is no lengthening in accusatives like *πόδα*, *ποιμένα* or *ἡγεμόνα*, for in these no mora is lost; the final syllable is still represented by *-a*. A long form of the accusative is found only in such stems as carry a long vowel throughout the whole paradigm; *αἰθῶνα*, genitive *αἰθῶνος*, &c.

One curious result may be mentioned in passing. Streitberg declares himself a convert to the theory, to which Brugmann has clung throughout amid almost universal opposition, that original *ō* in an open syllable is represented in Skt. by *ā*.

The treatment of the genitive is interesting. It has often been held on the ground of the requirements of the Teutonic and Slavonic languages that there must have been a genitive suffix in *-so*. The present theory requires that the *-so*-suffix should be original. The treatment however of the genitive **podo-so* seems to me inconclusive. Streitberg contends that this form had the principal accent on the first syllable, the last syllable disappeared having no accent, while the middle syllable having some amount of accent survived; hence **podos* out of **pódōso*. This contention seems at variance with the rest of the theory; at any rate it requires, in order to be convincing, a fuller treatment than it receives.

The verb is a less fertile field than the noun, but here too the theory obtains some

interesting results. The 3rd person of the perfect γέγονε is the same as the Skt. *jajāna*; the Skt. 1st person *jajāna* should be represented in Greek by *γέγενα. The Skt. causative *bhārayati* represents by its *ā* the same original sound as in φορ- of φορέω; the Aryan passive aorist which appears only in the 3rd person singular (Skt. *avāci*, Zend *avāci* &c.) is explained, after Osthoff, as a substantive form of the same type as στρόφι-, τροχι- in Greek, which, like other noun forms, has engrafted itself upon the verb. The only part of the verb where the working of the theory is certainly manifested is in the -s aorists. The suffix is shown to occur in three forms: -es- -os- and -s-; but

the vowel is recognized as in reality part of the root; Skt. *a-nāisam* is therefore developed from **a-nayī-sam*. Other points regarding the verb cannot be illustrated from the classical languages and may be left to the reader to find for himself.

In conclusion it may be said that Professor Streitberg's style is a model of lucidity, that the paper contains many points which have not been mentioned here, and that the conclusions, if they can on the whole be held to be established, as I think they can, make it the most important article that has appeared on such subjects for a considerable time.

P. GILES.

MERRY'S EDITION OF THE WASPS.

THE latest instalment of Dr. Merry's edition of Aristophanes maintains the high level of its predecessors. It displays the same literary skill in translation, the same refined scholarship, and the same delicate appreciation of wit and humour.

To the man of the world, who wishes to renew his acquaintance with the greatest works of Aristophanes, no edition can be more highly recommended. As school-books, Dr. Merry's volumes have the merit, which is rarely met with in present-day text-books, of not superseding the use of grammar or dictionary. They are suggestive without being exhaustive.

The *Vespæ* has of late attracted much attention from scholars. The edition of Mr. B. B. Rogers is familiar to all lovers of literature. During the last few years have appeared the commentaries of Dr. Blaydes and Prof. Van Leeuwen, and recently the school-editions of Dr. Merry and Mr. Graves. After the exhaustive work of Dr. Blaydes, editions for some years to come will be but *τεμάχῃ* from his *δείπνα*. Nothing is left to commentators but the labour of judicious selection. His edition is a mine of learning. To one who wishes to tread with a firm foot the mazes of Attic diction, his work is indispensable, although the redundancy of expression and the extraordinary haste with which he has thrown his materials together sometimes so exasperate the reader that he is tempted to cry out (with a slight variation of Socrates' words) ἄλλως με προδίδασκε ἵνα μὴ ἀπὸ σοῦ ἀποφοι-

τήσω. Indeed, in the absence of an index, his commentary is:—

Monstrum horrendum informe ingens cui
lumen ademptum.

Still, although one of the extremities of this monster may be βολίτινον, assuredly the other is not of brass, but of gold.

The edition of Mr. Graves can be compared more fairly with Dr. Merry's. It is equally scholarly, though perhaps it falls below the other in literary taste and originality. However it possesses the merit of giving the chief MSS. variants at the foot of the page, and of marking the *Strophes* and *Antistrophes* in the choral odes, and the divisions of the Parabasis. The omission of all such marks is the great defect of Dr. Merry's edition. It is a work of some difficulty to discover where the *Strophes* end and the *Antistrophes* begin.

To the schoolboy no doubt, for whom this edition is primarily intended, the metrical character of a choral ode is one of the mysteries of Faith. *Credunt quia non intellegunt*. In Dr. Merry's edition the lines are cut into apparently equal lengths, but, on a closer examination, this superficial correspondence is found, in many cases, to fall to the ground. A few instances will prove my point.

Vesp. 296—

Ἄ | στραγάλους δῆπουθεν, ὦ παῖ.